

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The action by the Examiner of this application, together with the cited references, has been given careful consideration. Following such consideration, claims 1, 3, 5-6, 8, and 10 have been amended to define more clearly the patentable invention applicants believe is disclosed herein. Please note that claims 5 and 10 are now independent claims. Claims 2, 4, 7, and 9 are unchanged by the present amendment paper. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner reconsider the claims in their present form, together with the following comments, and allow the application.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,415,264 to Walker et al. It is respectfully submitted that Walker et al. '264 fails to teach or suggest the invention as set forth in the present claims.

The Examiner appears to find the subject matter of the present invention directed to determination of points to an information provider according to the evaluation from an information browser, as taught in the cited reference (Walker et al. '264). It is respectfully submitted that this finding is not correct, since there are three kinds of claimed users in the present invention. These three kinds of users are also described in the paragraphs [0047]-[0051] of the specification, as (i) proposers of a theme, (ii) providers of information related to the theme, and (iii) browsers of the information.

The present invention is directed to the mechanism of how to determine points for each of these three kinds of users. In the present invention as claimed, while points of (iii) browsers are decreased when information is browsed, not only points of (ii) providers of the browsed information are calculated, but also points of (i) proposers of the theme of the browsed information are increased. To this end, claims 1 and 6 have been amended to clarify the three kinds of users.

In contrast, Walker et al. '264 discloses merely two kinds of users, "sellers" and "buyers", and that a posting payment amount for "sellers" (points of (ii) providers) is determined according to the reputation percentage of "buyers" (evaluation of (iii) browsers). However, Walker et al. '264 is completely silent as to how to determine points for (i) proposers of the theme of the information browsed.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that all of the present claims are believed to be novel, thus patentable over Walker et al. '264.


The cited references made of record and not relied upon have also been reviewed. It is respectfully submitted that none of these additional references teaches or suggests the applicant's invention as defined by the present claims.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in proper condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes there are any further matters that need to be discussed in order to expedite the prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

It should be noted that an **Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)** accompanies this Response. The reference identified as "NALC as NPO, and organization of voluntary activities under Time Dollar System, starts Takahagi branch, Hitachi-City, Ibaraki" that was cited in the IDS filed October 12, 2004, is now being resubmitted for the Examiner's consideration with an abridged English translation. The Examiner is respectfully requested to consider the references cited therein.

If there are any fees necessitated by the foregoing communication, please charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0537, referencing our Docket No. II7448US.

Respectfully submitted,



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I hereby certify that this correspondence (along with any paper referenced as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited on the below date with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Date: June 2, 2005


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